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Health Buddy Demonstration for Oregon, Washington, and Nevada

Key Words

Care, Management, Demonstration, Pilot, Quality, Chronic, CMO, FFS, Medicare, Health, Buddy, Bend, Fremont, Wenatchee

Provider Types Affected

Providers who bill Carriers, Fiscal Intermediaries (FIs), Regional Home Health Intermediaries (RHHIs), and Durable Medical Equipment Regional Carriers (DMERCs) for beneficiaries participating in this demonstration project

Background

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services awarded contracts to six Care Management Organizations (CMOs) to conduct a three-year Care Management Demonstration with chronically-ill, high cost beneficiaries. Each CMO project is part of a collective demonstration to test provider-based intensive care management services as a way to improve quality of care and reduce costs for fee-for-service beneficiaries who have one or more chronic diseases.

Call Script

You shall use this script for responding to provider inquiries regarding beneficiaries in this demonstration project.

- Medicare has awarded a contract to Health Hero Network, Inc. to conduct a pilot project called Health Buddy. The pilot will be conducted in three locations: Bend Memorial Clinic (Oregon), Fremont Medical Center (Las Vegas, Nevada), and Wenatchee Valley Clinic (Washington). As part of this project, Health Buddy will offer services to a selected group of fee-for-service (original Medicare plan) beneficiaries who have one or more chronic conditions. Participation is the beneficiary's choice. This project is intended to improve quality of care and reduce costs by helping participants manage their health and avoid emergency room visits and hospitalization.

- This three-year pilot demonstration project will begin early 2006. Health Buddy is not a new insurance plan. Choosing to be in this project does not mean that the beneficiary has joined an HMO, Medicare Advantage plan, or other non-fee-for-service health plan. Participation will not alter a beneficiary's Medicare coverage, choice of providers, or access to care. It will not cost the beneficiary anything beyond normal Medicare copayments or deductibles.
- Some of the services offered by Health Buddy will help participants:
 - Learn more about their chronic conditions;
 - Get support for their doctor's plan of care; and
 - Keep track of their medical treatments
- To learn more about Health Buddy:
 - Call 1-888-917-5556;
 - Email medicareinfo@healthbuddy.com; or
 - Visit <http://www.healthbuddy.com/medicare>.

Key Tips

- This is NOT a new insurance plan. It does not replace Medicare FFS benefits, but provides additional support services for those who are eligible to participate.
- Participating in this program does not mean that the beneficiary will be enrolling or have enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan or HMO.

Important Links

http://www.cms.hhs.gov/manuals/pm_trans/R28DEMO.pdf
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/matters/mmarticles/2005/MM4100.pdf>
<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/researchers/demos/CMHCB/default.asp>